

Direct payments for carers

Improving the wellbeing of carers in Slough and enabling them to keep their independence



Introduction

Carers are people who provide unpaid support to a relative, partner or friend. This could be caring for someone who is ill, frail, disabled, has a mental health condition or issues with substance misuse.

Many people who are carers do not see themselves as such because, first and foremost, they may be husbands, wives, partners, parents, siblings or friends.

However, by providing unpaid care and support, they are in fact carers.

Direct payments for carers are designed to support carers in different aspects of their lives, and to help ease some of the extra pressures arising from their caring role.

In order to qualify for one of these payments, carers will need to have a carer's assessment or review undertaken by the council that has identified an unmet eligible need.



How are direct payments useful?

Direct payments can help carers receive money in their own right to buy support and assistance and continue caring. The people they care for can also receive direct payments to help with their own care needs.

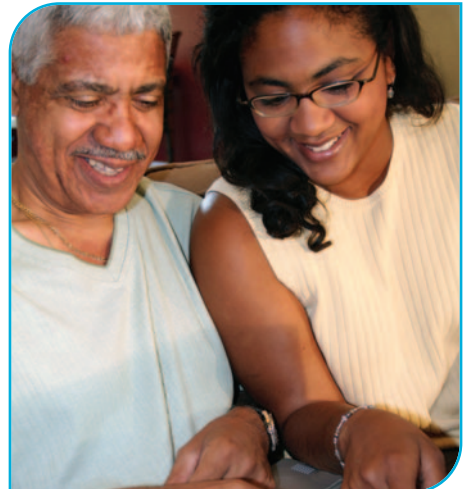
A carer's direct payment is a one-off payment provided by Slough Borough Council, to buy services or support to help being a carer. The money from direct payments is not considered as income and cannot be taken into account if you are assessed for welfare benefits.


If you have been assessed as needing support to enable you to continue caring for someone, you can choose to arrange this support with a direct payment.

What can direct payments be used for?

They can be used for:

- engaging in recreational activities and making use of necessary facilities or services in the community
- developing and/or maintaining family or other significant personal relationships
- accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering.





Some examples of how carers have used direct payments include:

- to have some leisure time or engage in a hobby
- to attend a gym, exercise classes or swimming pool
- to access a college course
- to learn to drive.

They are designed to be used imaginatively and flexibly but you will be accountable for the money spent, so you will have to ensure you only use it to meet your assessed needs.

What direct payments cannot be used for

- You cannot use direct payments to buy services for the person you care for. They can only be spent on getting the support you, as a carer, have been assessed as needing.
- You also cannot use direct payments to pay for support from your spouse or civil partner, close relatives or anyone who lives in the same household as you; for example, to carry out errands for you.

What do carers like about direct payments?

This is what carers have said they like about organising their own support via a direct payment:

More choice

- there is more choice over where support can be purchased from

More flexibility

- you can plan ahead and organise support when you most need it or most want it

More control

- there is familiarity and consistency with the support
- you can use the money whenever you want to

More independence

- the direct payment allowed me to have time out as a carer

It's not as hard as anticipated

- just keep receipts
- you don't need to open a separate bank account as the direct payment is received as a one-off payment

Carers' direct payments are designed to be as flexible and stress free as you want them to be.



Here are some examples of how carers have used their direct payments

Paul has been caring for his wife who has a neurological disease for several years and is supported by his family. He explained to his social worker that he has been feeling burnt out recently and would like a break as well as an opportunity to start a new hobby.

A carer's direct payment was agreed and Paul used it towards the cost of a three day fishing trip and equipment.



He was able to take his break and now has a new hobby that he finds relaxing and that has introduced him to a new circle of friends.

Yasmin told her social worker that coping with taking her two young children across town on the bus every day to nursery as well as caring for her husband with Multiple Sclerosis was just getting too much for her.

She owns a car but did not have a license. A carer's direct payment was agreed and Yasmin used it towards the cost of driving lessons.

Yasmin passed her test and is now able to use the family car, which has supported her to carry out her parenting responsibilities in addition to her caring role.

How to apply for direct payments?

If you already get support from the council, ask about direct payments. If you are applying for support for the first time, we will discuss the direct payments option with you when we assess your needs.

What to do if your circumstances change?

If the needs of the person you care for change - for better or for worse, in the long or short term, you should let us know as soon as possible so that we can reassess the level of payments you require.

More information

For further information about direct payments for carers contact Slough Borough Council's Adult Social Care Services on 01753 475111, option 1 or email adultsocialcare@slough.gov.uk



This document can be made available on audio tape, braille or in large print, and is also available on the website where it can easily be viewed in large print.

This leaflet has been developed with the support of the Co-production Network.



Direct payments for carers

If you would like assistance with the translation of the information in this document, please ask an English speaking person to request this by calling 01753 475111 .

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज में दी गई जानकारी के अनुवाद किए जाने की सहायता चाहते हैं तो कृपया किसी अंग्रेजी भाषी व्यक्ति से यह अनुरोध करने के लिए 01753 475111 पर बात करके कहें.

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Aby uzyskać pomoc odnośnie tłumaczenia instrukcji zawartych w niniejszym dokumencie, należy zwrócić się do osoby mówiącej po angielsku, aby zadzwoniła w tej sprawie pod numer 01753 475111.

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اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز میں دی گئی معلومات کے ترجمے کے سلسلے میں مدد چاہئے تو، براہ کرم ایک انگریزی بولنے والے شخص سے 01753 475111 پر کال کر کے اس کی درخواست کرنے کے لئے کہیں۔